



# HOOSIER HEALTHWISE BRIEFING

## Hoosier Healthwise 2003 Primary Medical Provider Satisfaction Survey

### Objective

A Hoosier Healthwise satisfaction survey is conducted annually to assess the attitudes, behaviors and perceptions of the Hoosier Healthwise program by the participating primary medical providers (PMPs).

### Method

This research is based upon a mail survey conducted among all PMPs participating in the Hoosier Healthwise program for all regions and health plan networks during calendar year 2002. Questionnaires were completed by PMPs, office managers and other office staff. From a total of 2,159 questionnaires distributed, 840 completed questionnaires were returned to an independent market research organization, Market Measurement, for data analysis. This translates to a response rate of 39 percent.

A technique called "data weighting" was used to ensure that the total/aggregate study findings accurately reflect the true size of the populations of PMPs for each region/network combination. Comparisons were made with the results of earlier PMP Satisfaction Surveys.

### Summary of Key Findings

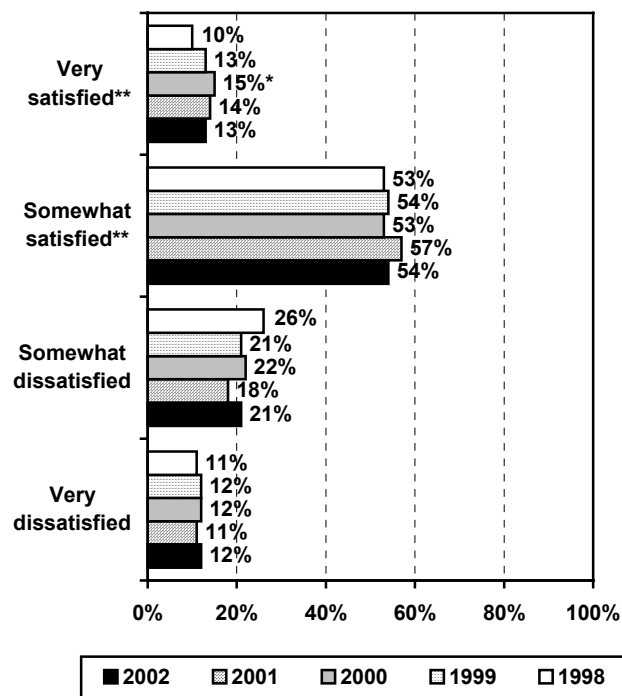
#### 1. PMP satisfaction of program.

- 67 percent of the PMPs were very or somewhat satisfied with the Hoosier Healthwise program. This represents a slight decline from the high of 71 percent in 2001.

#### 2. PMP satisfaction rarely differs by:

- practice type;
  - family practitioners,
  - pediatricians,
  - general internists.
- OB-GYNs, or
- general practitioners.
- practice profile;
  - solo practitioners or
  - group practitioners.
- geographic location, or
- network through which care is provided to Hoosier Healthwise members.

**TABLE 1**  
**LEVEL OF SATISFACTION**  
**HOOSIER HEALTHWISE PROGRAM**  
(2002 Total Responding = 734)\*\*\*



### 3. Favorable ratings for Hoosier Healthwise for 9 out of 12 criteria.

Well over half of all PMPs provide at least a “1,” “2” or “3” rating (1=excellent and 5=poor) for the Hoosier Healthwise Program when considering the following evaluation criteria:

- Ease of enrolling, as a PMP in your network (91%)
- Communicating your responsibilities to you as a PMP (89%)
- Accuracy of responses to your questions/concerns (75%)
- Indiana Health Coverage Program Provider Updates (91%)
- Communication from your network (82%)
- Authorization process for patients to access care from another provider (73%)
- Ease of verifying patient eligibility (86%)
- Timeliness of claims processing (79%)
- Hoosier Healthwise patients, in terms of following physician instructions (54%)

### 4. Key opportunities for improvement (i.e., low ratings of “4” or “5” where 1=excellent and 5=poor) for 3 out of 12 criteria.

- Reimbursement Rates (61%)
- Autoassignment process (60%)
- Hoosier Healthwise patients on keeping appointments (56%)

### 5. Patient Load

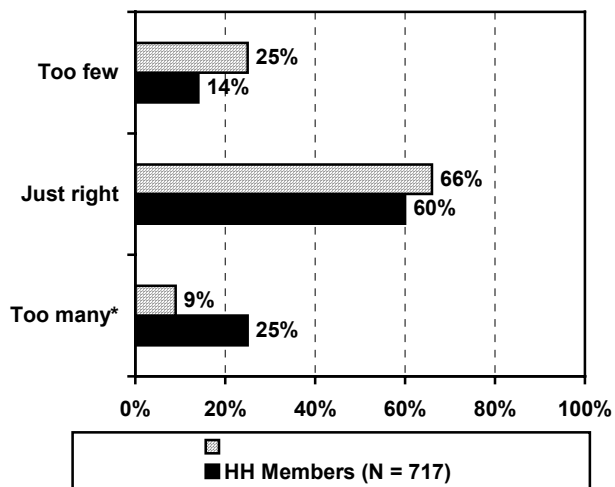
There has been a trend of increasing proportion (i.e., 18% in 1998 versus 25% in 2002) of PMPs who report having “too many” Hoosier Healthwise patients as shown in Table 2.

### 6. Program concerns from a PMP perspective

Among the PMPs providing a write-in response to the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, focusing on “problems or concerns” PMPs have with the Hoosier Healthwise Program, about one-in-four (29%) criticized reimbursement (i.e., typically “too low”). Comments were grouped in the following categories:

- |                                     |     |                         |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|
| • Reimbursement                     | 29% | • Claim/Coverage Issues | 10% |
| • Auto Assignment/Patient Mix       | 27% | • Patient Load          | 10% |
| • Communication                     | 23% | • Patient Criticisms    | 7%  |
| • Patient Compliance/ER Abuse       | 22% | • Paperwork             | 3%  |
| • Referral/ Precertification Issues | 19% | • Other                 | 12% |
| • Expand/Improve Formulary          | 12% |                         |     |

**TABLE 2**  
**2002 SENTIMENT TOWARD TOTAL PATIENT**  
**LOAD, VS. HOOSIER HEALTHWISE PATIENT**  
**LOAD**  
(Among Those Providing A Rating)



\* In 2001, total = 12% and HH = 24%

## **7. Positive attributes from a PMP perspective are heavily focused upon providing access to medical care for lower income patients.**

Among the PMPs providing a “write-in” response to the open-ended question asking about the “positive aspects” of the Hoosier Healthwise program, well over one-third specifically focused upon the value of this program in providing access to medical care to those who could not otherwise afford these services. Comments were grouped in the following categories:

• Access To Medical Care	42%	• Coverage Issues	7%
• General Positive Comments	23%	• Internet Access Comments	5%
• Good Staff/ Communications	19%	• Referral Issues	3%
• Reimbursement/Claim Filing	14%	• Requests For Improvements	2%

## **Recommendations**

1. To base planning activities on the possibility that negative sentiment toward the Hoosier Healthwise Program among PMPs may be shifting to a more challenging environment in which “PMP patience” with some program elements may be decreasing.
2. Assume that there is a close relationship between PMP sentiment toward the patient/physician relationship and overall satisfaction with the Hoosier Healthwise Program.
3. As has been consistently evident in this research, planning activities should reflect the likelihood of highly consistent PMP sentiment toward this program, regardless of MCO, region, type of practice or primary care specialty, i.e., activities should be program-wide.
4. Attempt to identify issues that could have translated into deteriorating sentiment toward patient/physician relationships among those in solo practice.
5. It may seem obvious that opportunities to improve patient/physician relationships should emphasize patients keeping appointments (i.e., or calling to cancel), as well as compliance with physician instructions. Nevertheless, these were the only two “aided” evaluation criteria, relevant to patient/physician relationships, included in the study. Consequently, efforts to improve PMP sentiment toward these relationships should include a more thorough investigation of all issues that could undermine PMP satisfaction ratings.

In summary, with the exception of reimbursement and the auto-assignment process, PMPs are comparatively more likely to be critical of their patient/physician relationships, than their interactions with the Hoosier Healthwise program. In response to these findings, work plans will be developed by the managed care entities and OMPP for program improvements.

For more information about the Hoosier Healthwise PMP Satisfaction Survey, please contact:  
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